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MR. PADDY WHACK'S

ANSWER

TO

MR. JOHN BULL,

IN JUSTIFICATION

OF THE

CHARGES AGAINST HIS COUNTRYMEN.

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,

THE CIRCULAR LETTER

FROM THE

UNITED IRISHMEN.

—DUBLIN:—

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1792.

THE

ANSWER, &c.

Dublin, January, 1, 1792.

MR. JOHN BULL, SIR,

INSTANTLY on receipt of your favour, I ſat down to give it ſuch an anſwer as might diſſipate thoſe fears, which, you ſay, agitate, at preſent, the minds of the good people of England. But, in truth, Mr. Bull, I am aſtoniſhed that a man of your ſenſe and knowledge in the affairs of the world, ſhould conſider it extraordinary in four millions of people, who have long writhed under the preſſure and torture of a corrupt influence, to inſiſt on liberation and relief——to inſiſt upon bleſſings which Providence intended, ſhould be as general and common, to every claſs of men, of every religion in every climate, as dew and ſunſhine—I mean a full enjoyment of political and intellectual liberty.

You will be ſurpriſed at the gravity of this ſtile, but you are to conſider, Mr. Bull, the ſubject is ſerious, and includes very ſerious conſequences——Iriſhmen are not now, as formerly,

ranting,

ranting, roring, bloods, blades, bucks and bullies —ballad-writers and ballad-ſingers, jeſters and pipers—No, Iriſhmen do not now form *patriotic* ſocieties to drink "The friends of Ireland in the Britiſh parliament," to drown the remembrance of their grievances in bumpers of claret, to blunt their faculties by intoxication, or to ſoothe their anxieties by a ſong.——No, Mr. Bull, the *Iriſh Choice Spirits* of theſe times, aggregate for different purpoſes; they not only ſtudy and converſe on the *Rights of Men*, but deviſe and conclude on the moſt effectual means of acquiring a permanent poſſeſſion of thoſe rights. Their minds bear ſtronger analogy to the ancient Roman, than to the modern Briton.—They now know, by long ſuffering, that "The *condition* upon which God hath given *Liberty* to Man is *eternal vigilance*; which *condition*, if he breaks, *ſervitude* is at once the *conſequence* of his *crime* and the *puniſhment* of his *guilt*." *(a)*

The ſtrength you have acquired from our weakneſs; the wealth you have amaſſed from our indolence; and the pride into which you have been bloated by our degradation, muſt convince you, Mr. Bull, that we have been too long inattentive to our intereſts, too long influenced by ill-founded prejudices and chimerical apprehenſions; but time and experience have at length cleared our eyes from the film of ſuperſtition, and we now view, through the medium of truth, thoſe objects, on the poſſeſſion of which, by the *whole people*, the

(a) See Mr. Curran's argument before the Lord Lieutenant in Council, on the chartered right of the city of Dublin.

proſperity of our country and the happineſs of ourſelves and our poſterity depend.

Real obligations to you and your connections, Mr. Bull, we ſhall always gratefully acknowledge, and you ſhould be equally alert in admitting the favours you receive from us. We deny the ſuperiority you arrogantly claim, but will always, as a Free People, be found friendly and faithful to our relative connection with you, and your connections, on terms of reciprocity.

The evidence of hiſtory, I acknowledge, ſupports your aſſertion that the majority of my countrymen are of Engliſh deſcent, and that almoſt every family in the kingdom has a portion of Engliſh or Britiſh blood flowing through their veins; but does not this evidence prove that our claims to conſtitutional freedom are not only founded in natural, but in hereditary right; for, I take it to be a principle in the law of England, that in whatever country Engliſhmen ſettle, there Engliſh liberty is immediately eſtabliſhed—ſuppoſe the People of Ireland had been conquered by the Engliſh, the principle would be the ſame; for it would be abſurd indeed to advance, that the conquerors of a foreign country, ſhould, by the act of conqueſt, looſe their native rights, and become ſlaves to the free country from whence they ſprung.

But, as to Ireland, the fact is, her People are neither to be conſidered as coloniſts nor as conquerors; but as an independent People, adopting the conſtitution of England as a conſtitution for Ireland; and therefore the laws of Ireland, enacted by the Lords of Ireland and the Commons of Ireland,

Ireland, and aſſented to by the KING of IRELAND, conſtitute the only legiſlative authority to which the People of Ireland owe duty.

But, Mr. Bull, notwithſtanding theſe very high ſounding words, boaſting of independence, I freely acknowledge that my countrymen have merely the *right*, without the poſſeſſion, of a *National Government*—We are ruled by an inſolent ſyſtem of ariſtocratic corruption, which conveys all power into the hands of a deſpicable oligarchy.—Power, in Ireland, flows from the rotten proprietors of rotten boroughs who, corrupted by public money, by places, by penſions, by titles and by promiſes, acquieſce with "*Engliſhmen, and the ſervants of Engliſhmen,*" in forming ſtatutes to keep the body of the People in awe, and to ſupport themſelves in luxury by promoting a continual encreaſe of Revenue. Free as our *Engliſh rulers* pretend we are, it is merely the affectation of liberty, the ſhadow, not the reality of freedom, that Iriſhmen are deluded by under-Engliſh Adminiſtrations. The vile ſubſtitute of undue influence, groſs corruption, has been introduced by theſe men, and pervades every department of the ſtate. In the Senate it negatives the natural effects of deliberation, in thoſe who rediculouſly call themſelves the *Repreſentatives of the People.*—On the Bench, we have often ſeen it biaſſing the determinations of judicial authority—in cities and corporations controlling the activity and impartiality of the magiſtrate.

To ſtem this corruption that party in the country called the Proteſtant Intereſt is inadequate.—The diſorders created by Engliſh agency, the exorbitancy of the demands upon adminiſtration, by

by the ariſtocratic borough-mongers, and other dependants, gives ſtrength, extenſion and continuation to a corrupt deſpotiſm, which can never be removed but by an union of every religious perſuaſion. But you will aſk of what uſe can the oppoſition of ſuch an union be among a people without *means* to enforce their wiſhes? I anſwer, we have the means—the means is a virtuous perſeverance—I anſwer, ſuch a virtuous perſeverance will produce conviction on the mind, and enſure the approbation of every honeſt man in the kingdom and out of the kingdom; it will drag treachery from her darkeſt ambuſhes—it will force tyranny from his ſtrongeſt poſts.

This, Mr. Bull, is the end propoſed by "The *Iriſh Catholic Society*," and the ſeveral *ſocieties of United Iriſhmen*; whoſe ſentiments and principles are daily miſrepreſented, by the hired ſcribblers of the Engliſh faction, for the purpoſe of injuring the cauſe of freedom and continuing the majority of the People in a ſtate of abject ſubjugation.

I am ſurpriſed, Mr. Bull, that a man of your boaſted liberality and philoſophy, ſhould be ſo ſevere againſt the Iriſh Catholics; you who have been ſo indulgent to the Catholics of your own country. It is true you have not yet admitted them into the Senate, but in many places you have reſtored to them the franchiſe of voting at elections for Members of Parliament, under conditions which they have univerſally accepted. By opening the bar you have qualified the Engliſh Catholics to become candidates for the Bench; and their admiſſion to the Senate ſhould naturally follow; for

for how abſurd is it, my dear John Bull, to ſuppoſe that the expounders of laws ſhall be incompetent to the making of laws; that men, who, when juriſts will be bound by their office to give legal advice in the Houſe of Lords, ſhall be ineligible to ſit as Repreſentatives in the Houſe of Commons.

You have alſo, my dear Bull, opened the Army to the Engliſh Catholics. You have put the power of the ſword into the hands of men whom you refuſe to entruſt with the authority of Legiſlation. You preclude the Catholics from exerciſing the rights of citizens in the Houſes of Lords and Commons, and you commit to them the command of the executive power—by which you have encreaſed the power of the crown, and in proportion to that encreaſe have diminiſhed the conſtitutional authority of the People.

You have ſummarily ſtated, in your letter to me, Mr. Bull, the diſqualifications which preclude Engliſh Catholics from enjoying the franchiſes of free citizens; but anſwer me, did not theſe diſqualifications ſpring from intereſted views, avaricious hopes, and gloomy apprehenſions; from the vices, the weakneſſes, the apprehenſions and the prejudices of the times wherein they originated? Are not theſe cauſes now happily removed? Has not the liberal light of toleration ſhone forth? Aſk the Proteſtants of France.—Is not religious toleration eſſential to the intereſts of a commercial country? Inquire of the ſubtle Hollanders.—Is not that ſweet anodyne philoſophy daily diffuſing its mitigating powers and blunting the aſperities of bigotry? I tell you, Mr. Bull, that in this country, the Preſbyterians of the North have manifeſted

feſted a determination as ardent for the granting of toleration as the Catholics of the South have evinced a deſire to receive the bleſſing, while the Members of the Eſtabliſhed Church, offering their hands to each party, have become the benign medium of reconciliation and union.

Theſe ſocieties of Iriſhmen, profeſſing different religions, whom you reprobate, Mr. Bull, as "Monſtrous and heterogenous," are not ſo novel in this kingdom as you affect to conſider them. In the reign of Charles the Second, a committee, conſiſting of Papiſts, Proteſtants and Preſbyterians, were deputed from Ireland into England, to proſecute Lord Strafford, and they perfectly agreed in purſuing the object of their miſſion. The ſocieties of *United Iriſhmen* do not pretend to give the people of Ireland a *common faith*, but they are determined, if poſſible, to give them a *common conſtitution*; and for the conſummation of this great end, they have pledged themſelves by a ſolemn teſt—they have pledged themſelves in the preſence of God and of their country, "To uſe all their ability and influence in the attainments of an *impartial and adequate repreſentation of the Iriſh nation in parliament*:"—they have pledged themſelves, that "As a means of abſolute and immediate neceſſity, in the eſtabliſhment of this chief good of Ireland, they will alſo endeavour, as much as in them lies, to forward a brotherhood of affection, an identity of intereſts, a communion of rights, and an union of power among Iriſhmen, of all religious perſuaſions, without which," as they have openly avowed, and ſpiritedly publiſhed, "every reform in parliament muſt be partial, not national—inadequate to the wants, deluſive to the

the wiſhes, and inſufficient for the freedom and happineſs of the country."

It is with horror and trepidation, I join you in entering the dreary labyrinth of the penal laws. The rays of mercy, it is true, have in ſome degree pervaded their dark fences and diſſipated their gloomy ſhades; but oppreſſion ſtill continues to wield her whip through the flinty blood-ſtained paths—then let the whole ſyſtem be rooted up—let every veſtige of their exiſtence be for ever removed from the land they have ſo long diſgraced. This is claimed by the Men of Ireland, and the *faction* that refuſes the grant, muſt be deſtitute of policy—deſtitute of humanity; muſt be actuated by the corrupt motives of foreign influence, or the narrow principles of ſelf-intereſt.

You have adopted an argument in your letter, Mr. Bull, which has been often urged in England and Ireland, againſt a total repeal of the Popery code—it is this, That *Papiſts* are free from the operation of penal laws, ſo long as the generous and merciful diſpoſition of their countrymen diſdain to put them into execution. Now, is it reaſonable to urge, that any law ought to remain on the ſtatute-books which is not executed? I ſay, every law too bad to be executed ought to be expunged; and this ſhould be well known to you, Mr. Bull, you, whoſe country for ages groaned under the oppreſſion of villenage tenure—you, whoſe country, from the conqueſt by the Normans, down to the 12th year of Charles the Second, was bound in the barbaric chains of the Feudal ſyſtem—I ſay, you, whoſe country ſo long ſuffered under pains and penalties, ſhould know, and ſhould confeſs, that

that tyranny does not conſiſt in the *number of laſhes* which a mercileſs maſter may lay upon the back of his ſlave, but in the power of any maſter to inflict a *ſingle laſh*, without incurring a juſtifiable retaliation.

I ſay, Mr. Bull, it is not ſufficient that the penal laws againſt Catholics reſt in ſleep—the voice of the people calls for their death—the humanity of the times will not ſuffer the barbarous Gothic pile to hang tottering over the heads of four millions of innocent perſons——will not leave it in the power of any adminiſtration, to cry havoc at their pleaſure, and let looſe the blood-hounds of perſecution.

What kind of man, Mr. Bull, do you ſuppoſe an Iriſh Catholic to be?—I had forgotten, you have deſcribed him, you pretend to conſider him of a mind intolerant to all mankind in matters of religion; inimical to civil liberty; of a ſpirit impatient of legal controul, and of a heart inveterate and pregnant with revenge.

Have you drawn thoſe concluſions from a contemplation of the penal laws againſt the unfortunate Catholic?—Do theſe laws breathe religious toleration?—Do they evince a patient ſpirit or a forgiving heart? I tell you, Mr. Bull, while theſe laws or any of theſe laws exiſt, while the Catholic remains precluded from any one of the franchiſes enjoyed by his Proteſtant fellow-citizens, he is, as you have ſaid, a helot, a ſlave, with an unprotected property—a victim, who if induſtrious, only fattens to become the more acceptable ſacrifice on the altar of deſpotiſm. Look to the hiſtory of the Catholics ſince the Revolution?—Do they deſerve the cha-

racter of perſecutors? Have they not ſuffered torture with a degree of humility and reſignation, equaling the patience of the primitive martyrs?

I ſee plainly, Mr. Bull, through the veil of your fictitious apprehenſions—I ſee plainly, that you object to the Iriſh aſſociations, from conviction that a coalition of *all* the religious ſects in Ireland, would communicate an irreſiſtible ſtrength to the nation—You fear that an acquiſition of the franchiſes of repreſenting, and of being repreſented, claimed by the Catholics, would create a rivalſhip in Ireland, mortifying to the pride of your country, ſubtracting from her commerce—You fear that the poſſeſſion of thoſe franchiſes by the Catholics, would raiſe Ireland from her preſent impotent and degraded ſituation, to power, reſpect and dignity—That it would communicate to her an intereſt in the politics, and a voice among the nations of Europe.

You fear more—you fear, Mr. Bull, the inſpiration that ariſes from the infuſion of liberty. You fear a revival of that ſpirit which ſo often rouſed the Catholics of England, in ancient times, to repel the efforts of tyranny both in Church and State.

Anſwer me, John Bull, what religion did *your* King Henry the Second profeſs, when the Iriſh received from him the laws of England; and what religion did the Iriſh profeſs when they adopted thoſe laws?

Anſwer me, John Bull, what religion did thoſe Barons profeſs who obtained Magna Charta from King John?

Anſwer

Anſwer me, John Bull, what religion did thoſe Biſhops, Abbots and Prieſts profeſs, who pronounced judgment of excommunication on thoſe who ſhould violate that charter?

Anſwer me, John Bull, what religion did Henry the Third profeſs, who confirmed the great charter with a grant of further immunities and privileges to the People?

Anſwer me, John Bull, what religion did the Parliament of Edward the Second profeſs, who ſo manfully oppoſed the introduction of Bulls from the ſee of Rome!

Anſwer me, John Bull, what religion did Edward the Third profeſs who gave a mortal wound to the encroachments of the Pope and his Clergy by limiting and eſtabliſhing the bounds of eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction.

Anſwer me, John Bull, what religion did the Parliament of Richard the Second profeſs, who enacted the ſtatutes of *premunire*—by which any one who procures at Rome or elſewhere, any tranſlations, proceſſes, excommunications, bulls, inſtruments or other things, which touch the King, againſt him, his crown and realm, and all perſons aiding and aſſiſting therein ſhall be put out of the King's protection, their lands and goods forfeited to the King's uſe, and they ſhall be attached by their bodies to anſwer to the King and his Council.

Anſwer me, John Bull, what religion did thoſe Lords and Commons profeſs who aided their ſovereign in enacting the ſtatutes of mortmain and thoſe other ſtatutes which excluded the clergy from the poſſeſſion of landed eſtates ?

Anſwer me, John Bull, what religion did that Engliſh monarch profeſs, who ſent the military Biſhop's armour to the ſucceſſor of St. Peter, with this memorandum—" Holy father ſee your ſon's coat."

Anſwer me, John Bull, what religion did thoſe Barons profeſs, who when queſtioned before their ſovereign by what title they held their lands, anſwered—drawing their ſwords,—" by theſe we got them; and with theſe by G—d we'll hold them."

Anſwer me, John Bull, what religion did that Archbiſhop of Canterbury profeſs, who in the reign of Henry the Fifth, prevented the King's uncle from being made a Cardinal and *legate a latere* from the Pope, on the mere principle that it was within the miſchief of papal proviſions and derogatory from the liberties of the Engliſh church and nation ?

If theſe men were Catholics, I think you will admit, Mr. Bull, they were not diſciples to the doctrine of *paſſive obedience in ſubjects*, of *divine rights in Kings*, or of *unqueſtionable authority in Popes* over *foreign countries*, in *temporal matters*. But that they were men who eſtabliſhed and protected thoſe rights and privileges which are claim-

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ed by the Iriſh Catholics of this day, and enjoyed by the Members of the Proteſtant Church.

You aſk me, Mr. Bull, will I and my Proteſtant friends unite with Papiſts, a race long ſtigmatized by acts of the Legiſlature. I have already anſwered, that many of thoſe laws, the moſt perſecuting ever enrolled on the archieves of any free country, have been repealed; but are not thoſe which remain a reproach to the good ſenſe of the Iriſh Parliament. To procure a repeal of thoſe laws is one principal object with the *Society of United Iriſhmen*. To obtain for the Catholics of Ireland, and for the other Diſſenters of every religious denomination, the exerciſe of equal rights and privileges with their brethren profeſſing the Proteſtant religion, by *law* eſtabliſhed, they conſider the *only* means of uniting, in cordial affection and intereſt, all claſſes and all denominations of the men of this country. It is the *principle* of that Society that every individual in the kingdom ſhould be intereſted in its proſperity. That every man may be entitled to poſſeſs not only a ſhare in the land but the right of franchiſe, the right of corporation, the right of voting for repreſentatives in parliament—nay, more, the right of ſitting in parliament, if elected, to the delegated truſt of repreſentation. This Society, I ſay, has for its object the bringing in to political life and political action, near four millions of perſons, who have been dead to ſociety—but above all, this Society has for its object, that of *Uniting the* IRISH *into a People!* a *great*, a *powerful* PEOPLE, with one *common intereſt*, one *common cauſe*—*the* NATIONAL PROSPERITY.

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It is an eſtabliſhed maxim in politics, Mr. Bull, that the riches and conſequence of a country conſiſt in the number of its inhabitants. Ireland has long proved the truiſm of this maxim by being an *exception* to the general rule. Near four millions of the Iriſh ſo far from adding either to the riches or conſequence of their country are a burden on its induſtry and muſt remain ſo till they *become free*; until that happy æra arrives, Ireland muſt continue to lie *under thoſe* political and commercial *obligations* to Great Britain, which you have ſtated in your letter; and which I intend to take into conſideration in a future anſwer.

This extraordinary encreaſe of population has for years paſt produced conſiderable emigrations of ſtarving Iriſh, who, deſtitute of ſupport at home, have fled from ſlavery and from hunger into foreign climes. The Iriſh Catholics filled the ranks of the American armies during the glorious and ſucceſsful conteſt of the colonies with Great Britain. Lord Cornwallis and General Burgoyne have felt what *my* countrymen are equal to when fighting under the banners of liberty—when fighting for a government that allows them a free exerciſe of religion and corporate rights.—It was perſecution forced thoſe men abroad—no man voluntarily flies into exile. Nothing but cruelty and oppreſſion drive men from their native ſoil; for which nature has planted, in the human heart, a rooted affection.

From what I have ſaid, you muſt confeſs, Mr. Bull, that the true intereſt of Ireland, at this day, requires that the Legiſlature ſhould grant a free exer-

exerciſe of civil rights to every claſs of religious Diſſenters; and not to continue, unneceſſarily, penal laws, which involve more than three fourths of the people in ſlavery—which preclude *all* the Catholics, and a conſiderable *majority* of the Proteſtants, from the rights of men, and cut them off from the benefits of the conſtitution. Laws which reſtrain man, not from doing *evil*, but from doing *good*—which prohibit induſtry by dooming men to vaſſalage in a land boaſting freedom, treating them as aliens on their native ſoil.

I ſay, Mr. Bull, the penal laws againſt Catholics ſhould long ſince have been repealed, had the general good and proſperity of the kingdom been objects with thoſe who form the Iriſh-Engliſh adminiſtration. Experience and truth muſt have taught thoſe men, had they attended to the one or to the other, that the ſure way to win the zealots of any country, is to court them by favours, by the hopes of fortune, by the hopes of honours;—that penalties on religious profeſſions, ever make the diſciples more perſevering. Give then the Catholics and Proteſtant Diſſenters of Ireland the conſtitutional franchiſes they ſeverally claim, and they will become enamoured, nay wedded to government, (for then there will be a governmet in the country) they will become wedded to government by the ſtrongeſt of all affections, ſelf-intereſt, and ſelf-preſervation. It was thoſe affections gave liberty to America; it was thoſe affections matured the ſpirit of freedom now flouriſhing in France. This, Mr. Bull, is a liberal and enlightened age, in which private policy can not long ſuperſede public intereſt. Reaſon now ranges at large, enlightens the peaſant as well as the peer. Ireland no longer continues enveloped by a dark cloud of ignorance, is

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no longer warped by prejudice, no longer ſhrinks from demanding juſtice, appalled by viſionary apprehenſions.

You have fairly ſtated, Mr. Bull, the cauſes which produced the penal laws againſt the Catholics of England, but have not thoſe cauſes long ſince ceaſed? Has not the death of the late Pretender removed every fear, every jealouſy, that the Houſe of Hanover could poſſibly entertain, in reſpect to the execrated Houſe of Stuart?

The penal laws againſt the *Iriſh* Catholics, originated in motives materially different from thoſe which produced the penal code in England. Thoſe which relate to their *perſons*, were made in the reign of King William the Third; thoſe which relate to their property were enacted in the reign of Queen Anne. King William's object was the ſecurity of the ſtate; Queen Anne had for her object, the chimerical project of making Ireland a Proteſtant country. The Catholics ſuffered from the policy of the one, and the religious zeal of the other; yet, they never could be fairly accuſed of enmity to the conſtitution: on the contrary, even in their adherence to King James, they never thought of giving up their civil franchiſe; before they entered the field in his ſervice, they exacted from that weak and deluded monarch, a *Magna Charta*, confirming to Ireland an Engliſh conſtitution—Had Queen Anne then, or her miniſters, any reaſon to ſuſpect the political principles of the Catholics? was it not cruelty, weakneſs, bigotry in the extreme, to violate every principle of true religion, for the purpoſe of making proſelytes to a particular ſect? This they did—to make converts they attempted

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to force men's conſciences—they attempted to erect a tyranny over the mind, and adopted rigour to attain a purpoſe, which mildneſs and ſoft perſuaſion could only effect.

I tell you, Mr. Bull, the policy of granting *all* the Iriſh Catholics demand, is juſtified by their conduct. Were they found acting in the rebellion of 1715? No—Were they found acting in the rebellion of 1745? No—When this country had reſolved no longer to crouch beneath the burthen of oppreſſion that England had laid upon her, and accumulated from ſeſſion to ſeſſion, by repeated acts, reſtraining her trade—when ſhe armed in defence of her rights, and with an high ſpirit demanded a reſtitution of thoſe rights—Did the Catholics deſert the Proteſtants? No—they were found amongſt the moſt zealous aſſertors of liberty. They were found armed in the ranks of the Volunteer battalions. Did they avail themſelves of their numbers? Did they avail themſelves of their force? Yes—by *uniting* with *Proteſtants* and *Proteſtant Diſſenters*, in the common intereſts of their country!

When afterwards, it was thought neceſſary to call for a free conſtitution, did the Catholics take any advantage of the Proteſtants? Did they make terms for themſelves? No—they entered frankly and heartily into the cauſe of their country, judging by their own virtue, that they might depend upon the generoſity of their Proteſtant brethren.

The time for ſhewing that generoſity now approaches—the meeting of parliament is at hand, and the people will ſoon know what the Catholics have to expect from an adminiſtration compoſed of "*Engliſhmen, and the ſervants of Engliſhmen.*"

They know what they have a right to expect from Iriſhmen. The words of a great man, one of the greateſt that ever adorned human nature are impreſſed upon their hearts——

I allude to the mover of The *Declaration of Rights*——

" Shall we (ſaid Mr. Grattan) be a *Proteſtant ſettlement*, or an *Iriſh nation*? Shall we throw open the gates of the temple of Iriſh Liberty to *all* our countrymen, or ſhall we confine them in bondage by penal laws?

" So long as the penal code remains, we never can be a great nation. The penal code is the ſhell in which the Proteſtant power has been hatched, and now it has become a bird it muſt burſt the ſhell ~~or~~ periſh in it.

" In Holland, where the number of Roman Catholics is comparatively ſmall, the toleration of their religion is a *mercy* to them; but in this country, where they form the great bulk of the inhabitants, it is *policy*—an act of *neceſſity*—an act of *incorporation*.

" The queſtion is not, whether we ſhall ſhew mercy to the Catholics; but whether we ſhall convert the inhabitants of Ireland into a *people*; for ſo long as we exclude Catholics from natural liberty, and the common rights of men, we are *not* a people. We may triumph over *them*, but other nations will triumph over *us*.

" If

" If you love a Catholic, you may be ſure of a return from him; but if you treat him with cruelty you muſt always live in fear, conſcious that you merit his juſt reſentment.

" Will you then go down the ſtream of time, the Catholic ſitting by your ſide unbleſſing and unbleſt—blaſting and blaſted—or will you take off his chain that he may take off your's? Will you give him freedom, that he may guard your liberty."

My Anſwer has run into ſo unconſcionable a length, and upon only one point of your Letter, that I ſhall not now trouble you on any of the other ſubjects, in your letter; but be aſſured it is my intention to clear my countrymen from the charge of *Ingratitude*, with which you, Mr. *liberal* John Bull, have attempted to aſperſe them, and

I remain, your's,

as you deſerve,

PADDY WHACK.

Friday, 30th December, 1791.

SOCIETY OF

UNITED IRISHMEN

OF DUBLIN,

The Hon. SIMON BUTLER, in the Chair.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY, *That the following Circular Letter, reported by our Committee of Correſpondence, be adopted and printed.*

THIS Letter is addreſſed to you from the Correſponding Committee of the Society of United Iriſhmen in Dublin.

We incloſe the Declaration of Political Principles which we have ſubſcribed, and the Teſt which we have taken, as a ſocial and ſacred compact to bind us more cloſely together.

The object of this Inſtitution is to make an United Society of the Iriſh Nation, to make all

Iriſhmen—Citizens;—all Citizens—Iriſhmen; nothing appearing to us more natural at all times, and at this criſis of Europe more ſeaſonable, than that thoſe who have common intereſts, and common enemies, who ſuffer common wrongs, and lay claim to common rights, ſhould know each other, and ſhould act together. In our opinion ignorance has been the demon of diſcord, which has ſo long deprived Iriſhmen, not only of the bleſſings of well regulated government, but even the common benefits of civil ſociety. Peace in this iſland has hitherto been a peace on the principles and with the conſequences of civil war. For a century paſt there has indeed been tranquillity, but to moſt of our dear countrymen it has been the tranquillity of a dungeon; and if the land has lately proſpered, it has been owing to the goodneſs of Providence, and the ſtrong efforts of Human Nature reſiſting and overcoming the malignant influence of a miſerable adminiſtration.

To reſiſt this influence, which rules by diſcord, and embroils by ſyſtem, it is vain to act as individuals or as parties;—It becomes neceſſary by an union of minds, and a knowledge of each other, to will and to act as a nation. To know each other is to know ourſelves—the weakneſs of one and the ſtrength of many. Union, therefore, is power—it is wiſdom—it muſt prove liberty.

Our deſign, therefore, in forming this Society, is to give an example, which, when well followed, muſt collect the public will, and concentrate the public power, into one ſolid maſs; the effect of which once put in motion, muſt be rapid, momentous, and conſequential.

In thus aſſociating we have thought little about our anceſtors——much of our poſterity. Are we for ever to walk like beaſts of prey, over fields which theſe anceſtors ſtained with blood? In looking back, we ſee nothing on the one part but ſavage force ſucceeded by ſavage policy; on the other, an unfortunate nation "ſcattered and peeled, meted out and trodden down!" We ſee a mutual intolerance, and a common carnage of the firſt moral emotions of the heart, which leads us to eſteem and place confidence in our fellow creatures. We ſee this, and are ſilent. But we gladly look forward to brighter proſpects——to a people united in the fellowſhip of freedom——to a Parliament the expreſs image of that People——to a proſperity eſtabliſhed on civil, political, and religious Liberty——to a peace——not the gloomy and precarious ſtillneſs of men brooding over their wrongs, but that ſtable tranquility which reſts on the rights of human nature, and leans on the arms by which theſe rights are to be maintained.

Our principal rule of conduct has been, to attend to thoſe things in which we agree, to exclude from our thoughts thoſe in which we differ. We agree in knowing what are our rights, and in daring to aſſert them. If the rights of men be duties to God, we are in this reſpect of one religion. Our creed of civil faith is the ſame. We agree in thinking that there is not an individual among our millions, whoſe happineſs can be eſtabliſhed on any foundation ſo rational and ſo ſolid, as on the happineſs of the whole community——We agree, therefore, in the neceſſity of giving political value and ſtation to the great majority of the people;

and

and we think that whoever deſires an amended Conſtitution, without including the great body of the people, muſt on his own principles be convicted of political perſecution, and political monopoly. If the preſent electors be themſelves a morbid part of our conſtitution, where are we to recur for redreſs but to the whole community? "A more unjuſt and abſurd conſtitution cannot be adviſed, than that which condemns the natives of a country to perpetual ſervitude, under the arbitrary dominion of ſtrangers and ſlaves."

We agree in thinking, that the firſt and moſt indiſpenſable condition of the laws in a free ſtate, is the aſſent of thoſe whoſe obedience they require, and for whoſe benefit only they are deſigned. Without, therefore, an impartial and adequate Repreſentation of the community, we agree in declaring, We can have no Conſtitution——no Country——no Ireland. Without this, our late revolution we declare to be fallacious and ideal; a thing much talked of, but neither felt nor ſeen. The Act of Iriſh Sovereignty has been merely toſſed out of the Engliſh Houſes into the Cabinet of the Miniſter; and nothing remains to the People, who of right are every thing, but a ſervile Majeſty and a ragged Independence.

We call moſt earneſtly on every great and good Man, who at the late æra ſpoke or acted for his Country, to conſider leſs of what was done than of what there remains to do. We call upon their ſenatorial wiſdom to conſider the monſtrous and immeaſurable diſtance which ſeparates, in this iſland, the ranks of ſocial life, makes labour ineffectual, taxation unproductive, and divides the

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nation into petty deſpotiſm and public miſery. We call upon their tutelar genius, to remember, that government is inſtituted to remedy, not to render more grievous the natural inequality of mankind, and that unleſs the rights of the whole community be aſſerted, anarchy (we cannot call it government) muſt continue to prevail, where the ſtrong tyrannize, the rich oppreſs, and the maſs are brayed in a mortar. We call upon them, therefore, to build their arguments and their actions on the broad platform of general good, which muſt ever exclaim againſt the rights of nature being enjoyed merely by connivance, and the rights of conſcience merely by toleration. If you raiſe up a prone people, let it not be merely to their knees. Let the Nation ſtand. Then will it caſt away the bad habit of ſervitude, which has brought with it indolence, ignorance, an extinction of our faculties, an abandonment of our very nature. Then will every right obtained, every franchiſe exerciſed, prove a ſeed of ſobriety, induſtry, and regard to character, and the manners of the people will be formed on the model of their free conſtitution.

This rapid expoſition of our principles, our object, and our rule of conduct, muſt naturally ſuggeſt the wiſh of multiplying ſimilar Societies, and the propriety of addreſſing ſuch a deſire to you.—Is it neceſſary for us to requeſt, that you will hold out your Hand, and open your Heart to your Countryman, Townſman, Neighbour?——Can you form a hope for political redemption, and by political penalties, or civil excommunications, withhold the Rights of Nature from your Brother? We beſeech you to rally all the Friends of Liberty within your circle round a Society of this kind as a centre.

a centre. Draw together your beſt and braveſt thoughts, your beſt and braveſt men. You will experience, as we have done, that theſe Points of Union will quickly attract numbers, while the aſſemblage of ſuch Societies, acting in concert, moving as one body, with one impulſe and one direction, will, in no long time, become not parts of the nation, but the nation itſelf; ſpeaking with its voice, expreſſing its will, reſiſtleſs in its power.—We again entreat you to look around for Men fit to form thoſe Stable Supports on which Ireland may reſt the Lever of Liberty. If there be but Ten, take thoſe Ten. If there be but Two, take thoſe Two; and truſt with confidence to the ſincerity of your intention, the juſtice of your cauſe, and the ſupport of your Country.

Two objects intereſt the Nation—A Plan of Repreſentation,—and the means of accompliſhing it.——Theſe Societies will be a moſt powerful means. But a popular Plan would itſelf be a means for its own accompliſhment. We have, therefore, to requeſt, that you will favour us with your ideas reſpecting the Plan which appears to you moſt eligible and practicable, on the preſent more enlarged and liberal principles which actuate the People; at the ſame time giving your ſentiments upon our National Coalition, on the means of promoting it, and on the political ſtate and diſpoſition of the county or town where you reſide. We know what reſiſtance will be made to your patriotic efforts by thoſe who triumph over the diſunion and degradation of their Country. The greater the neceſſity for reform, the greater probably will be the reſiſtance. We know that there is much ſpirit that requires being brought into maſs, as well as much

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maſſy body that muſt be refined into ſpirit. We have many enemies, and no enemy is contemptible. We do not deſpiſe the enemies of the Union, the Liberty and the Peace of Ireland, but we are not of a nature, nor have we encouraged the habit of fearing any Man, or any Body of Men, in an honeſt and honourable cauſe. In great undertakings, like the preſent, we declare, that we have found it always more difficult to attempt, than to accompliſh. The People of Ireland muſt perform all that they wiſh, if they attempt all that they can.

Signed by Order,

JAMES NAPPER TANDY, Sec.

To whom Letters on this ſubject are to be addreſſed.